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Security Council

Seventy-third year

Provisional

8385th meeting
Tuesday, 30 October 2018, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Llorentty Soliz	(Bolivia (Plurinational State of))
Members:	China	Mr. Yao Shaojun
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
	Ethiopia	Mr. Amde
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Tumysh
	Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
	Sweden	Mr. Orrenius Skau
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
	United States of America	Mr. Cohen

Agenda

Peace and security in Africa

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Peace and security in Africa

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2018/961, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations. I would like to thank all Council members for sponsoring the draft resolution, which is now a presidential text.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, France, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2439 (2018).

I now give the floor to those members of the Security Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Amde (Ethiopia): We very much welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 2439 (2018) on the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We are pleased to partner with Sweden in facilitating the negotiation on the resolution. We thank all members for their flexibility and constructive engagement during the negotiation process, which has made it possible for us to adopt the resolution by consensus. We are also very grateful to all members for sponsoring the resolution.

The resolution is necessitated by the two important briefings that we received recently from the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) on the Ebola outbreak in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be commended for its leadership in responding to the Ebola outbreak, and particularly for providing free health care in affected health zones, as well as for its daily reporting on the status of the outbreak. We also appreciate the efforts of all humanitarian and health workers on the ground, including the World Health Organization and its partners in the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network, as well as all other front-line actors involved in the response effort.

We recognize that these humanitarian actors are operating under enormous difficulties to save lives. The security situation in the region affected by the Ebola outbreak is further complicating the ongoing efforts. That is why the resolution we have adopted today underscores the need to address the security situation in the areas affected by the disease and condemns all attacks against civilians. It also condemns in the strongest terms the recent attacks and the killings of two Congolese health workers attached to a Congolese army unit helping to combat the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The resolution also urges all parties to the armed conflict to ensure full, safe, immediate and unhindered access for humanitarian personnel and health services to patients and others in need.

The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been playing an important role in supporting the efforts of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the World Health Organization and other actors to respond to the Ebola outbreak in an extremely challenging and dangerous environment. We commend the Mission for its efforts within its existing mandate.

In his briefing to the Council, WHO Director-General Mr. Tedros Adhanom explained to us the gravity of the Ebola situation and the possibility that the virus could spread to other parts of the country and the wider region. This is also reflected in the World Health Organization's latest assessment of the risk that the virus could spread to Uganda, Rwanda, South Sudan and Burundi. It is in this context that we should encourage countries of the region to continue their efforts to prepare for operational readiness, in full cooperation with the World Health Organization. A regional meeting has already taken place in Entebbe, on 3 October, to review the implementation of cross-border disease surveillance activities and the status

of emergency preparedness activities in districts that border the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the East African Community.

Even though the World Health Organization has stated that a public health emergency of international concern should not be declared at this time, it remains deeply concerned by the outbreak and has emphasized that response activities need to be intensified and that ongoing vigilance is critical. Therefore, we hope that the resolution we have adopted today will send a strong message and contribute to mobilizing international support and engagement to bring the Ebola outbreak under control. It is indeed vital that the international community redouble its efforts in providing flexible financial support to enable a more rapid and effective response.

Mr. Orrenius Skau (Sweden): We too welcome the unanimous adoption today of resolution 2439 (2018), on the Ebola outbreak in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the ongoing efforts to respond to this crisis. We appreciate the close collaboration with our Ethiopian partners and we thank all Council members for their constructive engagement and the sponsorship of the resolution by all 15 members.

The resolution sends a clear, coherent and comprehensive message of support to all those involved in front-line response efforts on the ground in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in neighbouring countries. I should like to highlight four key elements in that regard.

First, it points to the extremely challenging security situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and strongly condemns all attacks by armed groups against civilians, including humanitarian and health personnel. Let me be clear — the women and men who are working on the front line to battle this disease, and who risk their own lives to save those of others, deserve our respect and our protection. They must never themselves become targets — not in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, not anywhere. Humanitarian principles must be upheld everywhere, at all times and with no exceptions.

Secondly, it commends the efforts undertaken by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and other actors in response to the outbreak. The continued leadership of the WHO remains essential. In order to prevent the deterioration of the present outbreak, the resolution also reminds us of the importance of strengthening national health-care systems.

Thirdly, it stresses the crucial importance of continued international engagement and regional cooperation. To address the overall humanitarian crisis, we need full, safe, unhindered and sustained humanitarian access, as well as adequate humanitarian funding. At present, the humanitarian appeal for the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains severely underfunded. As the third-largest humanitarian donor to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sweden stands ready to consider additional humanitarian funding and calls on others to do the same.

Fourthly and crucially, the resolution highlights how men and women are affected differently by the Ebola outbreak. Women must be fully engaged in the development of gender-sensitive response efforts.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is at a pivotal moment in its history, and the latest Ebola outbreak adds an additional challenge to an already challenging situation. The support expressed through resolution 2439 (2018) therefore comes at a pertinent time, and our common task is now to fully support the efforts of the WHO, MONUSCO, the Congolese Government and other actors on the ground to combat the further spread of Ebola and thereby contribute to promoting long-term peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the region.

The meeting rose at 10.10 a.m.